

“Beyond the Basics”

The Learning Contract

A Learning Contract is a specific agreement between the student and teacher and/or parents that allows opportunities for various choices in exploring, learning, applying and completing a product within certain specifications. It is used to expand, enrich and extend the essential curriculum. The Learning Contract provides differentiated opportunities according to Learning Styles which help define interests and abilities.

Uses of Learning Contracts

“The goal of the contract is to provide students with a structure that will allow them to take responsibility for their own learning while giving them freedom to explore content and develop themselves.....”

*Jeremy Zhe
The Teaching Effectiveness Program
Academic Learning Services, 65 PLC,
University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon*

- ➔ Vehicle for students to try a new way of learning
- ➔ Personalization of learning
- ➔ Technology can be incorporated into the learning
- ➔ Opportunities to approach student achievement gaps for individuals or small groups
- ➔ Helps students get involved with decision-making by designing and following a specific plan for learning
- ➔ Modified or adjusted to needs
- ➔ Teaching by student interest

“...it changes the student from being merely reactive...to being proactive in taking the initiative in proposing work to meet the requirements.”

James Atherton, DeMontfort University, 2003

Learning Styles Chart to Identify Interests and Abilities

Howard Gardner, Harvard University, 1991

Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: Theory of multiple intelligences

Linguistic	Logical/ Mathematical	Spatial	Musical	Kinesthetic	Interpersonal	Intrapersonal
Likes to read	Likes to explore patterns	Likes to draw	Likes Music	Likes to move around	Likes lots of friends	Likes to work alone
Plays Word Games	Uses reasoning and calculating to figure things out	Spends time solving puzzles	Sensitive to sounds in their environment	Communicates by using body language	Joins groups or clubs	Tends to shy away from others
Is good at making up poetry or stories	Is good at problem-solving	Is good at hand-eye coordination and has a good sense of direction	Is good at rhythms and tones in music	Is good at physical activities like sports or dance	Is good at understanding people	Is good at following intuition and motivation
Writers, lawyers, journalists, teachers	Scientists, engineers, doctors, economists	Artists, engineers, architects	Singers, conductors, disc-jockeys, composers	Athletes, dancers, builders, surgeons	Sales, politicians, managers, social workers	Marine biologists, philosophers, psychologists, theologians, writers
Likes the computer	Likes to ask questions	Likes to design and create things	Likes to study with music in background	Likes acting and performing	Likes to work in large groups	Likes to pursue own interests and goals
Learns best by saying, seeing, and hearing	Learns best by categorizing, classifying, and investigating	Learns best by drawings, visual displays, photographs, video, multimedia	Learns best by using songs to memorize information	Learns best by hands-on activities, acting out, and role playing	Learns best by working with others, seminars, workshops	Learns best by books, diaries, creative materials, independent activities

<http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_multiple_intelligences

What needs to go into a Learning Contract?

- What do you want to learn? **Information/Tasks**
- How will you learn?..... **Process (Use the Learning Styles Chart)**
- How much time will it take to complete the process? **Timeline**
- What will be the artifact to show evidence of the learning? **Product**
- Grouping of the Learning Contract? **Individual, Small Group, Learning Center, Compacting, Class**
- Assessment? **Tool**
- Person/s that will assess the Product? **Self, Group, Teacher, Committee**

Components:

- Task
- Timeline
- Process
- Product
- Grouping
- Assessment Tool
- Person/s to Assess the Product

Example of a Learning Contract Elementary

My Learning Adventure

Name: _____

Date of Contract: _____

Due Date/Timeline: _____

Reason for the Choice: _____

Topic or Question to be Answered: _____

Materials/Resources/Help Needed: _____

Product to Demonstrate Understanding and Application: _____

Grouping: _____

Assessment Tool: _____

Evaluated by: _____

Here is what I know:

Student Signature

Teacher Signature

Parent(s) Signature

Example of a Learning Contract Secondary

Learning Contract

Name: _____ Date of Contract: _____

Due Date/Timeline: _____ Reason for the Choice: _____

Content Area of Study: _____

What question is to be answered?

Materials/Resources/Labs/Help Needed: _____

Product to demonstrate understanding and application of the question answered:

Grouping: _____

Assessment Tool: _____

Evaluated by: _____

Prior knowledge of the subject:

Student Signature

Teacher Signature

Links to Learning Contracts

<http://faculty.tamu-commerce.edu/jthompson/Resources/LearningContracts.ppt>

http://www.learningandteaching.info/teaching/learning_contracts.htm

<http://www.centralischool.ca/~bestpractice/contract/index.html>

<http://www.journalism.umd.edu/Contract.pdf>

Books and Resources

Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom (2001), published by Free Spirit Publishing. The book comes with a CD ROM of these and other forms that are customizable for classroom use.

Learning Contracts and Team Teaching in a University ESL Writing Class

David Schwarzer, Robert E. Kahn, and Kristi Smart
sdavid@mail.utexas.edu

The University of Texas at Austin (Texas, USA)